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HN NBNC I

Tommy Rhymes

Arthur V. Diehl

They fell as men, to rise as Stars
Which cannot be denied

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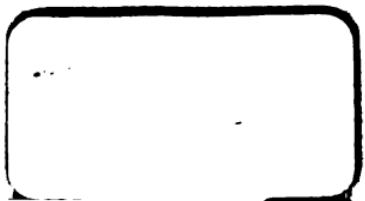
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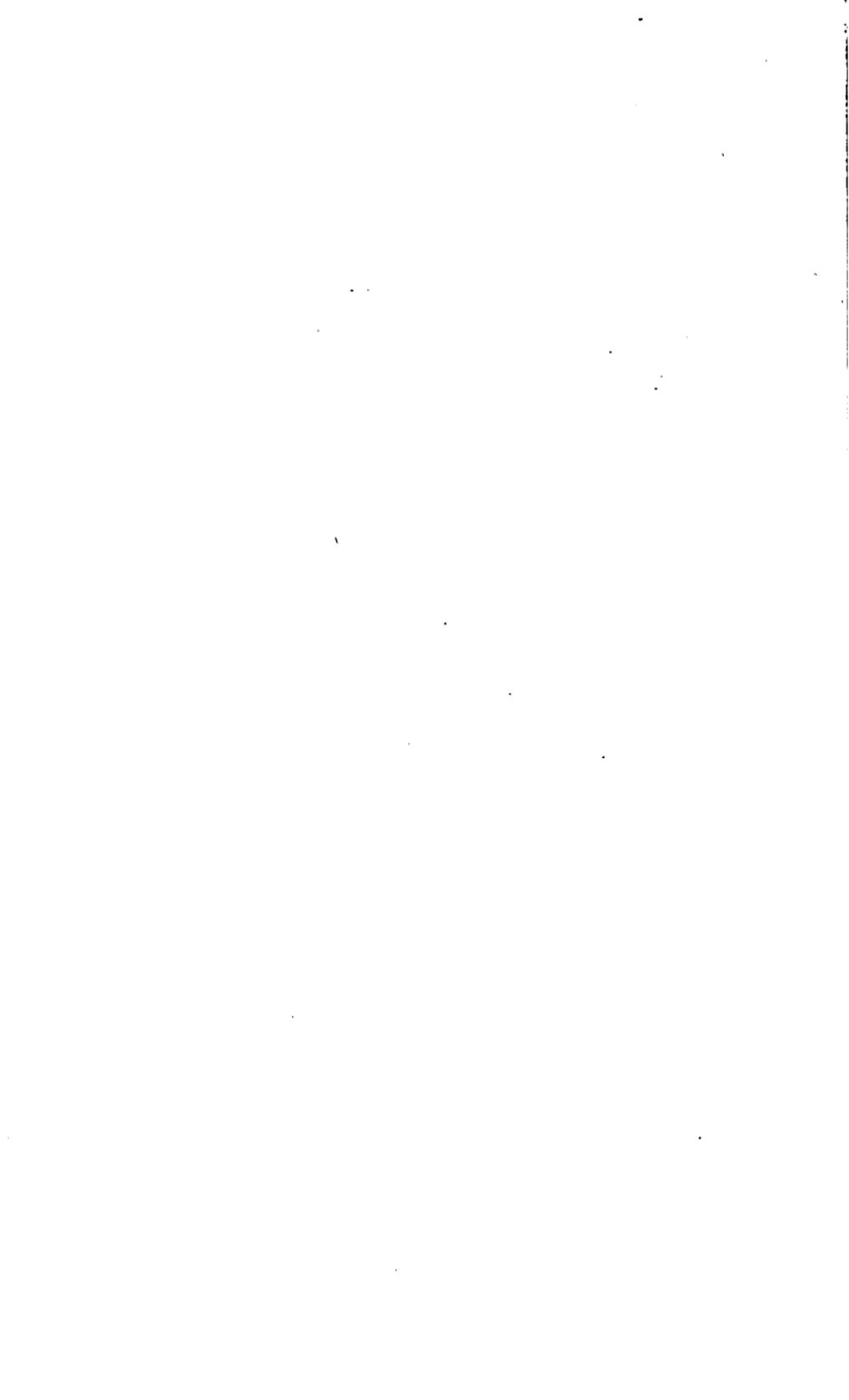


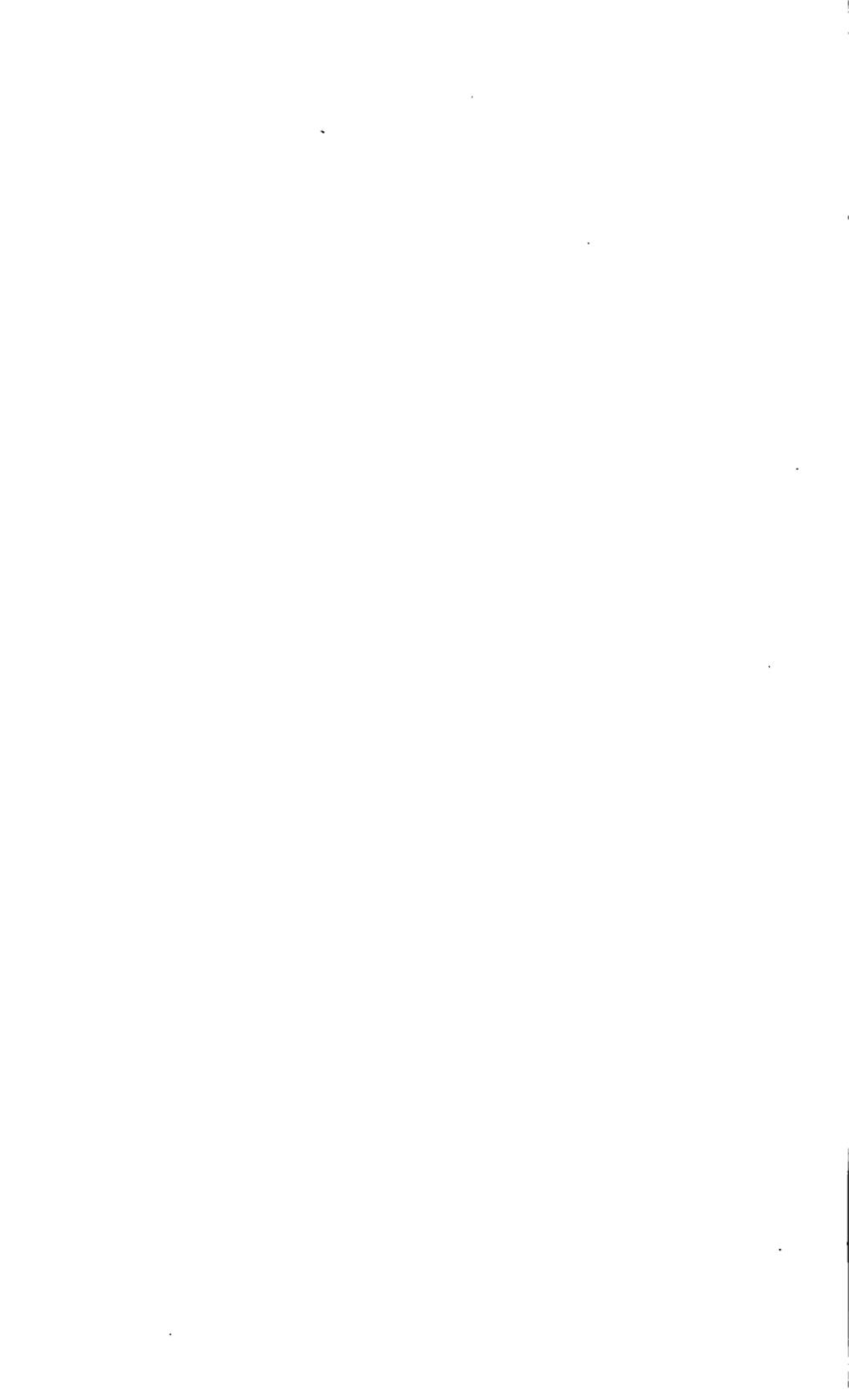
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FROM

Prof. G. L. Kittredge







“TOMMY” RHYMES



“TOMMY” RHYMES

BY
ARTHUR V. DIEHL



BOSTON
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Prof. G. L. Kilbidge,
Cambridge

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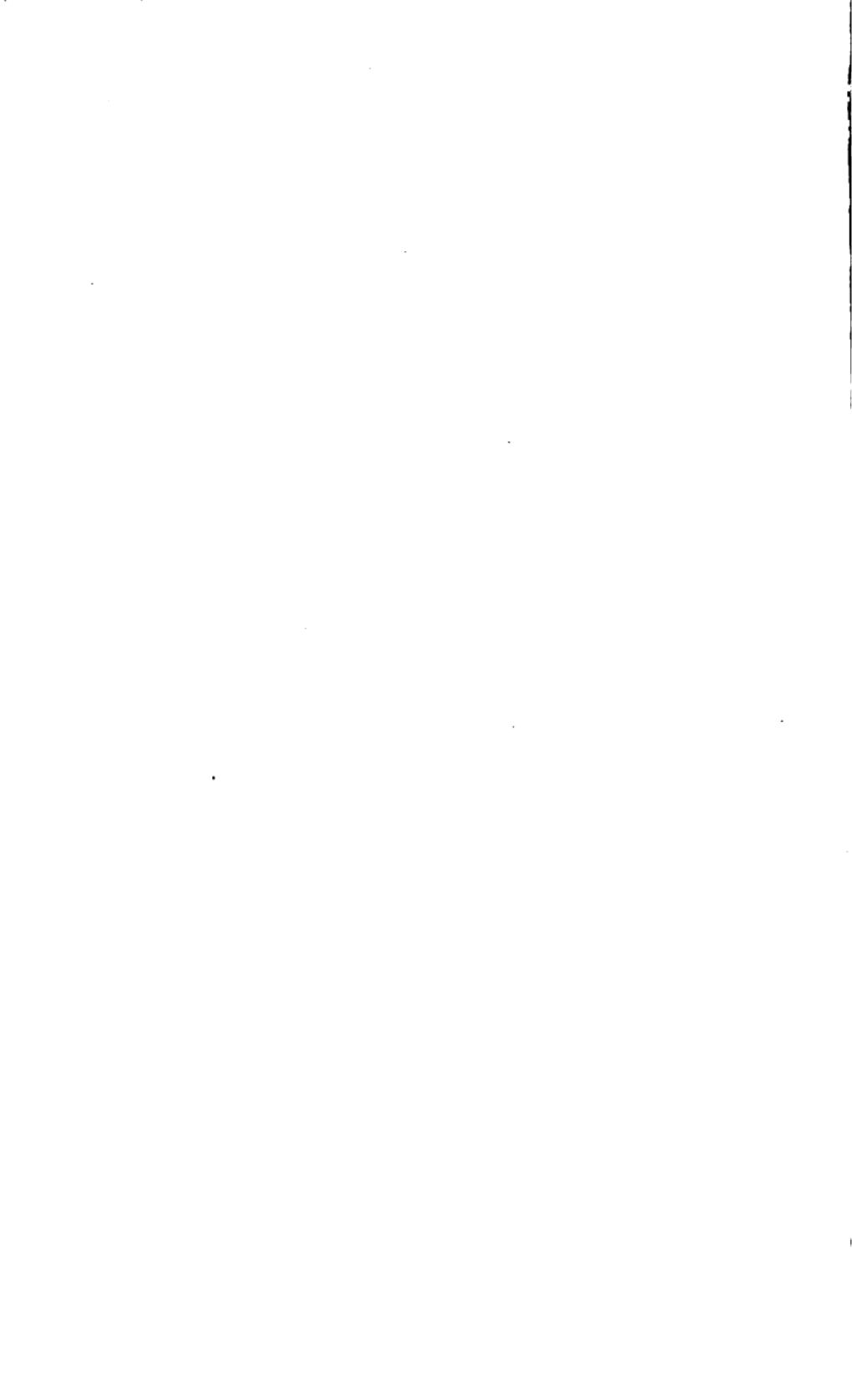
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“TOMMY” RHYMES



“TOMMY” RHYMES

PROLOGUE

IM 'ERE ter be dictyted to, I'm Tommy on the square,
I don't know nothink, who I am, nor do I really care;
I only know that on this pyge I orter come ter life,
Becos' the feller carvin' me 'as sharpened up 'is knife;

'E trims me words so careful like, and cuts out all the damns,
'E just won't 'ave me cuss and swear, but squats me on me 'ams,
And says ter me: "Now look 'ere, boy,—yer really must be'ave,
Fer I 'ave took the liberty of givin' yer a shave.

So please tyke notice from this out—yer got ter act yer part
By cuttin' out and trimmin' down all cuss words from the start;

“TOMMY” RHYMES

And then, I'll 'ave yer know, I want the everlastin'
you,

And not the dirt and camouflage which mykes yer
look askew.

I want the 'eart and soul of all yer really think and
feel;

And if yer'll give that there ter me,—why, just this
much, you're real;

You'll live and breathe upon the pyge, and every
one will 'ear

The message that yer wants ter write, and 'ear it
very clear.

Now aint it worth yer while ter try and do yer wery
best—

Fergettin' why yer body sleeps, and why yer went
out west?

You are an 'ero, now, “says 'e,” and died fer all of
us!—

“All right, “says I, “I'll do me best, fer better or
fer wuss.”

So 'ere I am, the 'ole of me, dear lydies and dear
gents,

And please ferget the w'y I looks, in patches and in
rents;

PROLOGUE

I earned 'em all, yuss, one by one, all through the
blinkin' war—
And now I've introooced meself, I'd better s'y no
more,
But act the part of all of us, as went the self syme
w'y,
Ter find the only think worth while, the *truth* we
knows ter-d'y.

“TOMMY” RHYMES

IN FLANDERS

A PORE little shiverin waif 'e wos,
lorlummy ! 'ow 'aggard and pale,
A crawlin' around on 'is 'ands and knees
and a travelin' like a snail,
But I couldn't 'ave fathomed the look in 'is eyes
unless I 'ad gone ter war,
They wos wiser by far than an 'undred years,
aye, 'undreds, and then some more.
E wos smeared ter the innerds wif Flarnders mud
and covered with pimply sores,
T wos all on account of the grub as 'e got
a festerin' through 'is pores,
And 'e clutched to 'is bosom an 'arf dead cat—
and the two of 'em looked alike—
There wos 'ell in their eyes, as we sloppered erlong,
the regiment on the 'ike.

It's a curious thing that I never fergit
the look in that 'ere kid's eyes,
Nor the look in the cat's, fer the matter o' that
and yer couldn't 'ave called it wise,
And yer couldn't 'ave said 'twas a cowerin' fear,
or even a look of fright,

IN FLANDERS

But a bit of 'em all, wif an extra thing,
a kind of a "*second sight*"—

You can s'y wot yer like, you can think as yer
please,

you can 'old up me words ter scorn—

But the kid and the cat saw the end of the world
as surely as you wos born;

They wos innercent things in the middle of 'ell,
and Gawd wos a speakin' there,

A tykin' them out of the jaws of death,
to a plyce where there's peace—fer fair.

“TOMMY” RHYMES

YER MONEY OR YER LIFE

I 'AVEN'T got a lot of brains, not 'arf enough
ter see

The reason why we went ter war, except, 'tween you
and me,

We acted rather like a kid who's bullied at 'is school,
So wants ter fight, regardless, when 'e's treated like
a mule.

The bully always 'as the most of everythink 'e craves,
Until a bigger bully comes; just as the bigger waves
Will swaller up the littler ones when there's a storm
at sea,

Or bigger fish eat littler fish, or so it seems ter me.

If I 'ad got a lot of brains, I'd search around ter find
The reason why one thing is first, and why one's
left be'ind;

I wouldn't be quite satisfied until I got ter know
Why we must use a bigger fist ter down the bigger
blow.

The 'Uns were wrong ter fight at all, but we, I must
suppose

YER MONEY OR YER LIFE

Were really, truly, more than right ter fell 'em with
our blows;
And yet, oh 'ell! it's 'ard ter know—the 'Un said:—
'might is right,'
And we said: 'No, fer right is might, then started
out ter fight.

And now the war is over with, the fightin's just
begun
And 'eving knows, I'm sure I don't, when scrappin'
will be done;
We'll firstly 'ave ter figure out the w'y ter 'old our
peace
Is chuckin' out our interest, or we shall never cease.

Fer money is the bully now, and interest its fists,
If I could down it, I should like ter enter in the
lists
Ter prove a man could live without the money which
'e steals
By striking down the poorer man with money in
'is deals.

For money is the ghost be'ind the conscience of the
man;
'E looks around and finds 'e 'as ter 'ave it if 'e can;

“TOMMY” RHYMES

’E finds ’e’s glued ter common things without it, to
be shore,

And so ’e listens ter its voice, and listens more and
more.

It tells ’im first there’s somethin’ wrong with ’im
who ’asn’t got

Enough ter buy the ’appiness which ought ter be ’is
lot;

Then, not content with this, it adds ; ’There aint no
blinkin’ God

Exceptin’ me, so don’t fergit ’tis me who ’olds the
rod.

I am the pow’r—I rule the world—all men must bow
ter me—

And I can buy the best of men, and women likewise,
see,

You knows I’m tellin’ yer the truth—you went
through four years ’ell

Ter ’elp ter put me on me throne, and did it very
well.

So now, me boy, you’d better use the little brains
you’ve got

YER MONEY OR YER LIFE

To serve yourself by servin' me, and get your wit-
tles 'ot,

For you're alive, and I can buy your 'unger or your
bread;

So myke yer choice and do it quick—yer'll be a long
time dead.

“TOMMY” RHYMES

REMINISCENCE

AN 'Un's an 'UN! Gorblimy! Don't fergit!
Yer think yer myde 'im over! Wyte a bit
'E'll come agyne! Yer 'aven't licked 'im yet.
'E's 'ardly touched, and that's the worst of it.

And 'ere I am, a grocer. Not 'arf, I aint,—
I carnt fergit, yer see. I tell yer wot
The sight of blood once used ter myke me faint—
And now I 'ungers for it, quite a lot.

I'm like a beast that's tysted blood, yer know,
Just raw fer more. I give me wife a fright
And wyke the kids quite offen when I go
A shoutin' and a swearin', in the night,

Across the bloody wire. It's all a dream—
I knows it is; but tell me, wot's the dif
Between a dream that wykes yer up ter scream
And wot it wos—the syme old bang and biff?

I wosn't 'it. I'm 'ere ter tell the tyle.
But Gawd! 'ow many of 'em 'ad ter die!

REMINISCENCE

Fer what! Just nothink! That's wot mykes me
rile.

And this 'ere League of Nations, oh my eye!

It fair gives me the 'ump. I'll stow me garf
Or I might s'y too much. America!
Oh, wot's the use. You're right, it is to larf,
Though I'm not syin' Wilson aint a star.

Wot do I think of most since this 'ere war?
Just this: I'd like ter 'ear the squelchin' noise
Beneath me bayonet;—ter see the gore
Pump aht and soak the mud;—ter see the boys

Come back ter life that's dead and gone,—that's
wot;—

And arter that ter wipe the bloody 'Uns
Clean off the earth fer good and all; ter pot
A few meself, and die among the guns.

That's all. I'm just a grocer, bless yer 'eart;
Just standin' 'ere and weighin' pounds of tea.
This world's a rummy one. I'll play me part,—
And die a grocer yet, it seems ter me.

“TOMMY” RHYMES

THE SPY

DON’t ever show me lydies ears, leastways, not white and cold,
They’d set me creepin’ any time, if they wos young or old;
I’d ‘ave ter start ter thinkin’ back across the passin’ years
Ter see an ’uddled figure and the whiteness of its ears.

There aint no bloomin’ story much connected with the gell,
She wos a woman spy, I knows, indeed I knows too well,
Fer I wos detailed on the squad as sent ’er to ’er doom,
And I can see ’er standin’ ’ere, yuss, right in this ’ere room.

This ’ere’s the funny part of it, we didn’t know ’er sex
Until the thing wos over with, or we’d ‘ave broke our necks
Before we’d shoot a woman down, as ’adn’t done no more

THE SPY

Than love a blinkin' 'Un too much, and prove it to
the core.

She'd myde a pal of all of us, and acted it so smart,
We really 'adn't no idea that she just played 'er
part;

She 'adn't myde a single slip, until, one quiet night
We caught 'er at a telephone she'd 'idden out of
sight.

"Twas Capting Jones from Camden Town who 'eard
'er talkin' 'Un

In our communicytion trench, and this is what 'e
done,

'E clapped 'is pistol to 'er 'ead,—still thinkin' 'er a
boy,—

And marched 'er to 'Eadquarters at the muzzle of 'is
toy.

Well, arter that, of course we knowed the 'ist'ry of
'er end

Yet all of us wos 'oping that the capting would un-
bend;

But no, they soon court-marshalled 'er, and sentenced
'er to die

Fer practicin' espionage, when dawn showed in the
sky.

"TOMMY" RHYMES

I never carnt ferget the march that mornin' in the
rain

With 'er between the lot of us, nor shall I see again
A little chin 'eld 'igher in the raw and chilly air,
Or see a smile so confident, no matter 'ow or where.

She wouldn't 'ave no 'andkerchief nor nothink on 'er
eyes,

But fyced us all with levelled guns without the least
surprise:

"Good-bye," says she, as calm as that, "you're not
a doin' wrong,

"Fer I'm an 'Un and proud of it," she added clear
and strong.

I think she said those words to us ter myke us shoot
ter kill,

Becos' she saw us waverin' and lookin' sick and ill
Ter see 'er standin' there so sweet—a bonnie, win-
some slip,

And know that we must cut 'er off, by silencin' 'er
lip.

The order cyme, and down she went, a riddled
through and through,

And when the orficer stepped back, why 'ell, we knew,
we knew,

THE SPY

By seein' of 'is 'aggard fyce, it wos a woman there
A lyin' in an 'uddled 'eap, all crumpled up fer fair.

Not 'arf a sickly crowd, m'ybe, not 'arf, so strike me
pink,

As marched back to 'Eadquarters, plus the fightin'
and the stink;

There wosn't one among us who could s'y a blinkin'
word,

And as fer eatin' breakfast, why, that 'ere wos just
absurd.

"Twas in the line of dooty, yuss, of course that 'ere's
all right;

We 'ad ter to do it; yuss, no doubt, just as we 'ad
ter fight;

But I, fer one, would give a lot, if I could quite
fergit

That 'uddled little figure, and the misery of it.

“TOMMY” RHYMES

ON THE JAMBOUREE

O, TER lie in peace and listen, and just gaze—
gaze—gaze,

At 'er little feet a trippin' while they plays—plays—
plays

The intoxicytyn' fiddle and the drum—drum—drum,
With a tyste or two occasional, of rum—rum—rum.

O, the twinkle and the lightness of 'er feet—feet—
feet

Goes a tricklin' down me eart-strings like a beat—
beat—beat;

'Twill be 'ell termorer mornink in the trench—
trench—trench

Down among the blinkin' minnies and stench—stench
stench.

But terd'y we are livin', and it's love—love—love;

'Tis the billin' and the cooin' of the dove—dove—
dove;

Oh 'ell! we're only tystin' of the sweet—sweet—sweet,
And our 'ambones is the anchors to our meat—meat
—meat.

ON THE JAMBOUREE

Fer temrrorer comes the whistle and the scream—
scream—scream,
When the memory of rollickin's a dream—dream—
dream,
We shall all be back and muckin' in the mud—mud
—mud,
In the splittin', and the crackin', and the thud—
thud—thud.
Can yer blyme a blinkin' Tommy when 'e's out—out
—out,
For 'is flirtin', and 'is guzzle, and 'is shout—shout—
shout?
Can yer blyme 'im fer forgettin' 'e's a man—man—
man?
You're a blighter, and yer knows it, if yer can—can
—can.

“TOMMY” RHYMES

TOMMY SEARCHES

OH, I dunno? I 'ardly think I knows just wot I think.

It sometimes enters inter me that we are on the brink
Of somethin' bigger than we knows, which mykes no
blinkin' sound,

Yet follers 'ard upon our 'eels as we goes round and
round.

It stands ter reason, don't it now, that wot's beyond
our sight

Is really there, just as we're 'ere; and wot we see at
night,—

Those throbbin' balls in empty spyce,—can only
point the w'y

To others far beyond 'em all, and so on, I might s'y.

The four years 'ell 'as myde me think quite different
of late,

It 's myde me see that life at best is nothin' but a gate
Ter some queer kind of garding, yuss, like Eden was,
yer know,

Before Eve found the apple there, and 'ate began
ter show.

TOMMY SEARCHES

Now every kid that's born right now knows nothink
of the war,
Will read it all as 'Istory, just that and nothink
more,
But you and me as sawed it all, the four years bleed-
in' gyme,
Are sure we knows the 'ole of it, but do we, just the
sym'e?

We knows the part we took in it, and that is all we
knows,
And all the rest outside o' that, is 'ears'y, I suppose;
So don't yer think wot's in ourselves, and wot we do,
yer see,
Is all we're shore of in this life and all eternity?

I'd 'ate ter think those pals o' mine who died and
left me 'ere
'Ave LOST all sense of 'appiness, who 'ad no sense
of fear;
Who, countin' nothin', went right on, ter bryvely
meet their doom,
Must lie there everlastin' in the darkness of the toinb.

It don't seem right that this should be, and if not,
why, they're 'ere,

“TOMMY” RHYMES

Not sorrowin', lamentin' like, but bringin' us good cheer;
A tryin' 'ard ter myke us know, that wot we see and 'ear
Is just ourselves, and nothink else, and wot we don't,
IS FEAR.

Wot worried me in this 'ere war, wos not the things I knew,
But wot I just *expected*, see, might soon be orful true,
I didn't think of dyin' wunce, and yet I wos afryde
Of wot might 'appen to this flesh of which me body's myde.

Ter sum it up; I aint afryde no more ter think the dead
Comes in and out me room at night when I am in me bed;
Fer when I sleeps, I seldom dreams these nights, but lie in peace,
And when I wykes I seems ter know new wonders never cease.

ON THE TRYNE

ON THE TRYNE

GOOD mornin' Sir—I'll move me bag,

There's lots of room in 'ere—

Don't mention it—its quite all right,

No, no! I'd call it queer

If I could 'ave the nerve ter think

I owned this blinkin' tryne

Becos' I've 'anded out the price

Ter ride in one agyne.

O' course 'twas "transportytion free"

When I wos in the war,

And lots of other things wos free

Fer which I paid before;

They didn't charge me nothink when

I left me 'ome and wife,

Nor did they s'y a word abart

The riskin' of me life.

This tryne goes farst! Perhaps it does!

It don't seem so ter me,

Fer I wos in the flyin' gyme

Out there in France, yer see;

There never wos a single time

When I wos in the air

“TOMMY” RHYMES

I didn’t think wot blinkin’ snails
The trynes wos, over there;

Like caterpillers on the move
They crawled from plyce ter plyce,
While, up above, I ’ummed erlong
Me motor singin’ nice,
The puff balls from the Archies myde
The artificial cloud
Ter illustryte me angel wings
Of which I wos so proud.

And down below me wos the earth
Where ’uming beings fought,
Where every man that crawled erlong
Wos either sold or bought.
But I wos free, above the lot,
A king in everythink,
Above the roar, above the dirt,
The trenches and the stink.
I’d ’eard of cooties, dugouts, filth—

But that wos all I knew
Of sich like things, fer I wos clean
And ’ad a lovely view;
So there I sat, a droppin’ bombs
On top of ’Eine’s ’ead;

ON THE TRYNE

*(Not out of stinkin' Zeppelins
When children wos in bed,)*

But in the sunshine and the blue,
A livin', shinin' mark
Fer any gun that might be trained—
(Not sneakin' in the dark.)
That's why I say that I wos free
As any blinkin' bird;
For, arter all, in times of peace
A gun is there, I've 'eard,

Fer every bird that's on the wing
That 'uming beings eat;
And there I wos, the self syme thing,
Ter serve as 'Eine's meat.
Now, in this tryne, we, as it were,
Are in the creature's guts
That's breathin' steam and dirty smoke,
Which covers us with smuts:

But, up out there, above the clouds,
I didn't 'ave no dirt,
So I wos free and close ter Gawd
Where death could do no 'urt.
And bein' closer than the rest
As burrowed in the earth,

“TOMMY” RHYMES

I 'ad the charnce of findin' out
'Ow little life is worth.

You're gettin' aht? I'm sorry, Sir!
Of course I'll shyke yer 'and;
I'm glad yer think the flyin' corps',
The finest in the land:
Canydians, Austrylians,
Yuss, 'Ighlanders as well,
Wos all the syme in that there lot
That tysted 'ev'n and 'ell.

SOFTIE

SOFTIE

A SORTIN' turnips in a field
She stood,—and round 'er,—war!
'Er father wos a ne'er-do-well,
'Er mother—well!—an 'aw.

'Er misty eyes—('ow blue they wos!)
Looked miles and miles away,
As though they read and understood
The night beyond the day;

As though they fathomed why the man
Wot goes ter war's a beast—
She knew that, later, well enough,
Ter s'y the very least.

They faced a foe no crueler
Than 'er's,—the kind she faced;
Wot seal was worse upon 'er fate
Than this, which war 'ad traced?

Ter see 'er standin' there did this:
Stripped bare the nyked fact
That man 'as charged a toll on life
By each forbidden act.

“TOMMY” RHYMES

’Twas ard ter watch ’er workin’ there
 Till, som’ow, you could feel
The ’avoc round ’er wos the dream,
 ’Er thoughts alone wos real.

They called ’er “Softie,” for, yer know,
 They didn’t think ’er wise;
But I knew different, for I—
 Saw ’ev ing through ’er eyes.

RATS

RATS

I DISREMEMBER, seems ter me
 Me mytey's second nyme,
'E 'ad one, ter be sure 'e 'ad,
 But there, it's all the syme,
It doesn't matter, not a scrap;
 I allus called 'im Rats,
Becos' 'e 'ad an 'rror, like,
 Of any kind of cats.

'E wos a most peculiar chap;
 I sometimes thought, at first,
'E 'ad a screw loose somewhere, fer
 'E suffered from a thirst
As I 'ad never seen before,
 'E'd drink all kinds of stuff
That you and me would 'ate ter touch
 And never get enough.

One night we wos in number six,
 A blarsted list'nin post;
Our only light a candle, which
 Would larst an hour at most,

“TOMMY” RHYMES

When Rats looked parst me frigid, with
 A fyce as white as chalk,
At somethink right be’ind me, which
 Wos there, but couldn’t talk.

I felt me ’air a risin’, and
 A shiver down me back;
And wyted, ’rrorr-stricken, in
 The darkness, the attack
I felt wos comin’ towards me, as
 I saw me mytey’s fyce;
’Is droppin’ jaw wos frightful, and
 ’Is eyes, they wosn’t nice;

A chokin’ fear just gripped me, fer
 It seemed I ’eard a scream
Would turn yer blood ter water, if
 Yer ’eard it in a dream;
And arter this a wailin’, like
 An ’aunted soul in pain,
Which froze yer to the marrow, yuss,
 Till you wos ’arf insane.

We both of us stood shakin’, no,
 Just quakin’ is the word;—
Wot blinkin’ fools the both of us—
 We must ’ave looked absurd!

RATS

The reason wos so foolish that
I 'ates ter stop and think
Wot trifles may cause terror and
Can put yer on the blink.

Now Rats 'ad been a drinkin' 'ard
Of stuff 'e tried tyr myke
Of raisins, rice, and sich like things
That 'e could steal or tyke:
'E'd stoppered up a shell case, where
'E kept the beastly mess,
Which smelled like fifty corpses in
A row, I must confess.

The noise I 'eard be'ind me wos
The stopper workin' loose;
The wailin' wos the whistle of
The farst escapin' juice;
And as fer Rats—the D. T.'s laid
'Im low that wery night,
And I 'ad all I wanted of
That soul-possessin' fright.

“TOMMY” RHYMES

ON 'AMPSTEAD 'EATH

THERE'S a lonely little cross out there
one end of Vimy Ridge,
A little cross I myde meself,
a piece of broken bridge—
I carved Bill's nyme upon it, yuss,
the wery d'y we went
Ter jine the corps of engineers
whose ranks wos well nigh spent.

There isn't much of Bill out there
within the lonely gryve,
A shred or two of uniform,
and bits I tried ter syve;
I aint quite shore as all of it
wos Bill, or someone's pa
Among these kids on 'Ampstead 'Eath,
that's plyin' where we are.

I often thinks 'ow stryng it is
I seems ter see 'is fyce
Now 'ere, now there, among the crowd
as wisits this 'ere plyce;

ON 'AMPSTEAD 'EATH

I'm back 'ere now, upon the job,
right on me roundabout,
The horgin plys, the 'orses prarnc,
the children larf and shout:
But some'ow all the spirit's gone
from everythink ter me,
Fer Bill don't run the engine now,—
although 'e's 'ere, yer see!
Don't larf!—I'm tellin' yer the truth
I knows 'e comes and goes,
Although 'is body went ter bits,—
'is 'ands as well as toes—

'E comes and tells me wot ter do
when anythink goes wrong,
And 'elps me in a 'undred w'ys
each time 'e comes erlong.
It's wery wonderful ter me
ter 'ear 'im laugh and chat,
'E reely 'asn't chynged a bit;—
that's wot I'm gettin' at!

They thinks that since the war I'm cracked,
a little off the top,
Becos' I gets ter talkin' loud
at times around the shop;

“TOMMY” RHYMES

But they carnt 'ear the answers, which
is loud enough ter me,
Nor understand me when I says
it's just “telepathy.”

There wos a time I didn't know
that that there thing exists,
Which now, ter me, is just as real
as these 'ere grimy fists:
I sees and feels me fists, it's true
but why?—I allus arks,
Becos' when I am farst asleep
they might as well be carsks—

Fer all the good they do ter me
or all I knows or cares;
Where is me mind when I'm asleep,
which now me body shares?
It's all too deep fer me, I know,
and yet I'm satisfied
That Vimy Ridge and 'Ampstead 'Eath
ter Bill—are side by side.

'ARF A NOTION

'ARF A NOTION

OH! yer 'aven't 'arf a notion 'ow yer next door neighbor feels,
'E might even be a poet, or a cove wot robs or steals,
Or 'e might work on a railway, or the work'us,
brykin' stones,
But in a trench beside yer 'e's a 'eap of flesh and bones.

We were all a lot of cog-wheels, in the varst machine of war
And our energy wos needed, for it dwelt within our gore;
So they knowed enough ter feed us with the necessary food
That would set the wheels a whirrin', and would keep 'em at it good.

'Twas the chap who functioned 'igher, who 'ad got ter 'ave the faith
In a certain subtle somethink, which to us, wos like a wraith,
Fer 'e 'ad ter furnish ideas, 'ow ter drive the varst machine,

“TOMMY” RHYMES

That would do the work 'e called for—you can tell
just wot I mean.

Wot's the use of mincin' matters ; wars is cruel, fierce,
unjust,

And we're there as individuals fer the reason that we
must

Thrust aside our own conception of the proper w'y
ter live,

For the privilege of knowin' that our life is ours ter
give.

THE LUCKY BLIGHTER

THE LUCKY BLIGHTER

OH! the blinkin' path of glory
Wos so everlastin' gory
That it turned a Tommy's stummick as 'e trampled
through the mud;
It wos 'ard ter overwhelm it
While 'is blarsted drippin' 'elmet
Kept a soakin' of 'is shoulders till it chilled 'is wery
blood:

'E wos comin' to it slowly
In a w'y that wosn't 'oly
That the blighters in 'eadquarters wos a sittin' round
the fire,
And 'e couldn't see no reason
W'y the 'ell it wosn't treason
Fer the lot to tyke it easy just becos' of rankin'
'igher.

I'm a doin' of me dooty,
Thinks 'e, reachin' fer a cootie
Which 'ad some'ow lost it's bearin's, and wos crawlin'
down 'is spine;

“TOMMY” RHYMES

And I’m muckin’ in the mire,
While they squats around the fire—
And I’d like ter know the reason why they ’as it all
so fine.

All that night ’e kept revolvin’
And a spendin’ time resolvin’
’Ow ’e wouldn’t answer roll call if they gyve ’im arf
a charnce;
'E wos sick and tired of servin',
So 'e thought 'isselv deservin'
Of a little better billet than 'e 'ad that night in
Frarnc.

But 'e chynged 'is mind next mornin'
In the front line trench 'e'd gone in,
When 'e 'eard the thing that 'appened at 'eadquarters
in the night,
Fer the bally lot wos blown up
In a cloud of debris thrown up
When an extra 'eavy coal box came from 'Eine out
of sight.

Arter this 'e quit 'is grousin'
Neither did 'e do no sousin'
When at last 'e copped 'is blighty and 'e reached 'is
'ome and wife,

THE LUCKY BLIGHTER

Fer it started 'im ter guessin'

· And to arterwards confessin'

That the only lucky blighter wos the one who syved
'is life.

“TOMMY” RHYMES

’OW ’ABAHT THE COOK?

I WOS a regimental cook; yer see, I aint a cove
As knows wot's wot in everythink, and yet I think
I've strove
As 'ard ter understand the gist of all that 'appens
now—
(Fer war 'as myde a difference, a big one, you'll
allow)—
As any bloke who's 'ad the charnce ter know the in-
side track
Of policies and leagues and things which stypes 'ow
white is black.

We've licked the 'Un, but not fer long,—the Kaiser
is alive
And thinkin' too, I 'ave no doubt, 'ow 'e can best
contrive
Ter put 'issel self where 'e belongs, and that is, in 'is
mind,
A notch ahead of all of us, so we are left be'ind.
I'll tell yer this; 'e aint alone in wantin' ter advarnc,
Fer most of us would do the syme, if we 'ad 'arf a
charnce.

'OW 'ABAHT THE COOK?

It stands ter reason, don't it now, that 'e 'as lots of time

Ter think out w'ys and means a bit, and practice 'ow ter climb

From out the pen 'e's in right now, the 'Olland type, I mean,

Which gives a chap an 'oliday, a nice bright chynge of scene;

Besides the time ter plot and scheme ter get back to Berlin;

Rememberin' Napoleon, the fix that 'e wos in.

I 'ave no doubt there's lots of folks in Rooshia would be glad

Ter see old Willym back again with all 'e ever 'ad, And, in addition, wot the Tzar 'ad put aside fer 'im, Before the Bolshi's got it all, and tore it limb from limb.

They've got the 'ole thing in their 'ands, both Trotsky and Lenine;

The w'y they growls is ominous, these bears be'ind the scene.

There aint no question in me mind, that labor's now on top,

Yet, underneath it, boilin' 'ard, another kind of slop

“TOMMY” RHYMES

Is tryin’ ‘ard ter lick the scum from off the top, it seems,

By boilin’ over on the stove—(that’s where the fire gleams)—

Fer this, they think, will do the trick, and is the only w’y

Ter get rid of impurities At least, that’s wot they s’y.

But all of them fergit the Cook! The one who ‘olds the spoon;

Who’s managin’ the ‘eat and things, the one who, very soon,

Will skim the stuff ter suit ‘isself—and turn off all the ‘eat,

Ter give the best of us a charnce, *fer ‘e’s a cookin’ MEAT.*

I don’t care wot yer calls the cook, nor wot yer thinks ‘e is,

There’s one thing sure, and that’s enough—’es really knows ‘is biz.

‘E stands so ‘igh, this Cook of ours, above our silly ‘eads

That, knowin’ that ‘is ‘ands is there, we still think we’re the reds,

'OW 'ABAHT THE COOK?

The one pertic'ler brand of blood that's goin' ter
syve the age,

By boilin' over on the stove a lot of 'ate and rage.

That shows 'ow foolish men can be who wants ter
'ave their w'y,

They thinks they gets it, but, at last, the check's
fer them ter p'y.

A cook once told an awful truth, and this is 'ow it
goes:

'Too many cooks will spoil the broth,' there's only
one who knows,

And in 'is 'ead the knowledge reigns, that we are
nearly done,

And so 'e regulutes the 'eat, and stirs us one by one
Just round and round with 'is big spoon, a watchin'
all the while

Ter keep us in the pot, fer 'e, just *knows* we 'as
ter bile.

“TOMMY” RHYMES

TOMMY DURING A THUNDERSTORM

OW I wonders if I'm wiser, now this 'ere war 's at an end,
Fer the fireworks from 'eving seems a puny thing ter send,
All this thunderin' and lightnin' aint a marker 'gainst the war
Which could rend a bloke ter mincemeat, leavin' nothin', even gore.

I wos talkin' ter a sargint, yuss, 'twas out there
Wipers w'y,
And the larks wos singin' madly, fit ter split their throats, I s'y,
When a minnie dropped from 'eving, and it copped the sargint fair,
Fer a moment I wos blinded, then—*the sargint worn't there.*
All the 'ole of 'im wos missin', not a single thing ter show,
'E wos empty as a bubble when it's bursted, don't yer know,
And it started me ter thinkin', and a doubtin', on the 'ole,
If the man inside 'is carcass is the keeper of 'is soul.

TOMMY DURING THUNDERSTORM

Now the sargin went out suddint, and 'e 'adn't time
ter think

'Fore the bloomin' thing 'ad 'appened, while I'd
'ardly time ter blink;

Yet the 'ole of 'im wos missin'—'e 'ad wanished,
don't yer see;

'Ow the 'ell 'is soul went with 'im is a mystery ter me.

If yer sees a corpse beside yer, why, yer knows the
man is dead,

Yer can see 'is feet and stummick, and 'is eyes is in
'is 'ead;

But this kind of disappearin', leavin' nothin', not a
tryce,

Is the thing ter set yer guessin' wot is wot in time
and spyce.

Now I longs fer educytion, like the chaps as knows
wot's wot,

When it comes ter doin' wonders with the cold and
with the 'ot,

Fer it seems ter me the sargin is a livin', though 'e's
dead,

And I 'ears 'im talkin' constant, when I'm lyin' in me
bed.

“TOMMY” RHYMES

’E wos tellin’ me a story just that moment when ’e went

’Bout a little kid of ’is’n that the dear good Lord ’ad sent;

I could see ’is eyes a swimmin’, when the blinkin’ minnie cyme

And it busted in ’is middle;—Gawd!—just think of dyin’ gyme.

Fer the fraction of an instant, like that lightnin’ wos just now,

I could see ’is fyce a glowin’, and ’twas lighted up, I vow,

With a light of blyzin’ splendor that I’ll never see agyne,

Till in turn my soul goes upwards, leavin’ earth and all it’s pyne.

No,—yer carn’t tell me it’s wisdom that the *body* learns while ’ere,

Or the sargent would ’ave knowed it, and would tell me, never fear,

When ’is spirit seeks me pillow, and ’is woice sounds in the night

Like a flock of shinin’ angels, which is there, *but out of sight.*

THE WORLD'S REORGANIZIN'

THE WORLD'S REORGANIZIN'

NOW the world's reorganizin', fer it's 'ad its little spree,
And it's got its little 'eadache fer its payment, don't yer see;
There's no doubt about the outcome when we does a thing too much,
For we're bound ter come a cropper, and be 'untin' fer a crutch.

Oh, wot a blinkin' chump 'e is
Who tykes a drop too much;
Fer 'e's bound ter come a cropper
And be 'untin' fer a crutch.

So we're leanin' on our crutches now, the riches that we found
At the bottom of the muck-eap, but they won't go all around,
And there's lots of wretched beggars with not 'arf enough ter live
And a mob of greedy duffers who would rather die than give.

“TOMMY” RHYMES

Oh, wot a blinkin' chump 'e is
Who hasn't learned ter give;
Fer 'e's bound ter come a cropper
When the beggars learn ter live.

For there's somethin' comin', sure as fyte, ter iron
out the rags,
And ter smooth out all the wrinkles in the empty
money-bags,
And the world's reorganizin', not alone fer you and
me,
But for them as died ter syve us, and ter teach
democracy.

Oh, wot a blinkin' chump 'e is
Who won't wyke up and see,
Fer 'e's bound ter come a cropper
When 'e meets democracy.

TRYIN' TER FERGET

TRYIN' TER FERGET

RIGHT in the thick of it—lor! I wos sick of it,
Gawd! 'ow I 'ated the blisterin' war,
'Ated the 'ole of it, clean ter the soul of it,
Right in the middle of murderin' more.

Loathin' each d'y of it, what can I s'y of it
Other than call it a thunderin' shyme,
'Ow we wos 'urled in it, yuss, and wos whirled in it
Whether or no we wos 'arf dead or gyme.

Am I fergettin' it, all that I met in it,
Would I be lyin' ter s'y that I am?
Yuss, I am shore of it, fer I thinks more of it
Now that it's done and I don't give a damn.

What 'as your bayonet, red, got ter s'y on it
When you are wipin' its length on some 'ay—
'Ot with the 'ell of it, rank with the smell of it—
Other than 'atred and 'orrer, I say?

'Ow can I tell of it, 'arf of the 'ell of it?
'Ow can I think when I'm wonderin' yet
'Ow I got out of it, is there a doubt of it,
Seein' I'm 'ere tryin' 'ard ter ferget?

“TOMMY” RHYMES

TOMMY TO 'IS WIFE

THE 'ouse is silent, Millie dear,
the children is in bed,
The clock's a tickin' peaceful like,
so rest yer weary 'ead
Against your 'usband's bosom, dear,
and sit upon 'is knee,
And let us think this hour, my dear,
wos myde fer you and me.

Do you remember, Millie dear,
afore this blinkin' war,
'Ow I cyme reelin' 'ome one night
a shoutin' out fer more;
And 'cos yer 'adn't it I swore
and struck yer on the fyce?
Oh Gawd! me dear, I'll kiss yer now,
right on the wery plyce.

Yer needn't cry! Yer 'usband's 'ere
a better, better man,
Who knows 'e loves yer, Millie dear,
and mybe, if 'e can.

TOMMY TO 'IS WIFE

'E'll myke up fer the part 'e played
 by showin' 'er, 'is wife,
The 'Uns 'ad brought 'er 'appiness
 by sparin' 'im 'is life.

The war ain't misery to us,
 now is it, Millie dear,
It brought us back together, love,
 and took aw'y yer fear.
Look in yer 'usband's eyes right now,
 what do yer see in there?
Not 'arf a beast, but just a man,
 the man as myde yer care.

Look in the blyzin' coals, my dear,
 that there's a war yer see,
The carbon is a strugglin'
 ter set the gases free,
The fire burns up all the dirt
 and what is left is clean;
But for them very ashes, dear,
 this world 'ad never been.

Yer 'usband burned up in the war
 the dirty part of life,

“TOMMY” RHYMES

The part as shouldn't lie between
the 'usband and the wife:
Ah! now you're smilin', Millie dear,
the smile I used ter miss;
Let's start our life all over now,
and seal it with a kiss.

TOMMY'S FALL

TOMMY'S FALL

I LEFT a missus aht at 'ome, a missus and a kid,
You'd s'y she's rare ter look at too, I'll bet yer 'arf
a quid;
And as fer 'im,—well, I don't know, 'e's just a bit
all right;
That's 'ow I knows I lost me 'ead, when I met 'er
that night.

I took 'er fer a Flarnders gal, she 'ad a twisted
smile
And ankles wot'd turn yer 'ead and 'old yer quite a
while;
Those wos the keys ter fit me lock, a feller wif the
'ump
When 'ome sweet 'ome wos stickin' in 'is gullet like
a lump.

The trenches wos fergotten as I walked the boulevard
A cigarette between me lips, which I wos puffin' 'ard
When, lookin' down, I saw 'er feet—(mybe they
wosn't trim),
And 'igher up two swellin' calves above 'er ankles
slim.

“TOMMY” RHYMES

But when I caught 'er eye I choked,—the 'ole of me
gyve w'y
And 'ome sweet 'ome went fadin' back ter some fer-
gotten d'y,
She 'ad me 'ooked, I trailed erlong, and pretty soon
I found
The two of us wos steppin' far upon forbidden
ground.

No need fer me ter tell the truth, you know it, wot's
the use!
A liar allus proves 'issel by mykin' an excuse,
But 'ere's the queerest thing of all, I fell so 'ard fer
'er,
And she fer me, I knew fer sure, that somethin' would
occur.

That mornin' when I left 'er in the midst of drizzlin'
ryne
I felt as mean as anythink, and partin' wos a pyne,
And when I joined me regiment, the word 'ad come
fer us
To 'old the front line trenches, and fer once I didn't
cuss.

That night upon the firin' step, a watchin' no-man's-
land,

TOMMY'S FALL

I gyve meself a talkin' to, fer plyin' such a 'and
Agyne the gyme of decency, a wonderin' the while
'Ow soon I'd get the punishment, and in wot kind of
style.

I 'adn't long ter wyte ter see ; the 'Un that wery night
Thought best ter 'ope the gytes of 'ell, ter strafe us
into fright,

And pretty soon me blighty came, and copped me in
the eye,

And then fer extra measure like, just split apart me
thigh.

They rushed me to emergency, and so on to the base,
Where I wos yellin' all the time I'd win the blinkin'
race,

Fer some'ow I wos dreamin' that I 'ad ter win or
bust

Against a 'undred demons who wos whackin' me for
lust.

There aint no use of argument, we pays up fer our
sins,

And wunce we've done a dirty thing the punishment
begins ;

But this I'll s'y, I don't deny I acted like a cur,
What busts me now ter bits is this—*the wrong I did
to 'er.*

“TOMMY” RHYMES

TOMMY WON’T AGREE

ACCORDIN’ to the lytest chap, we are the ’alt and lame

Who sees all things as others see, and merely play the game

We should be different, it seems, not natural or sane,
Fer that’s the worst that we could do if freedom we could gain.

We ought ter imityte the bloke who says that green is red,

That every man should stay awake when others go ter bed,

We orter focus on the light, not ’ang upon a strap
To ’elp support us all the while, says ’e, this lyter chap.

An everlastin’ bug ’e ’as of reachin’ up ter ’eights
'E wants to fly, 'e wants ter scream, so aeroplanes or kites

Is far too ’eavy for 'is 'ead, and so 'e beats around
A followin’, just like a moth, the light 'e thinks 'e’s found.

TOMMY WON'T AGREE

'E 'as, gorblimy! So 'ave we; but we're content ter
be

Just 'umming beings in the light 'e's lookin' for, yer
see.

We're 'umble, so we tykes the gifts that Gawd sends
down to us,

And tykes as we tykes a wife, fer better or for wuss.

Now what's the use in these 'ere d'ys of livin' hupside
down,

A searchin' fer a tragedy ter find a silly clown;
Of teachin' kids that black is white, and wice-wersa
too;

Of tellin' 'em that packs of lies is all there is that's
true;

Yer aint a goin' ter better things by jumpin' off the
dock,

You'll never put a bloke ter sleep by givin' 'im a
shock,

Unless yer do it with a jolt, intentioned, on the jaw,
And then you'd be a fightin' man, just that, and
nothing more.

I aches fer knowledge, yuss, I do, but not the crazy
kind——

“TOMMY” RHYMES

Which seems ter be the fashion now, so isn't 'ard ter
find;
So what I want ter know is this, ter bring me kids
up right,
That's stirred into this mucky mess, this feller's
shinin' light.

THE 'ARP OF 'EVING

THE 'ARP OF 'EVING

THERE'S a time that comes ter all of us
when we knows quite a lot,
When the 'arp of 'eving wykes us
to the knowledge we aint got;
Though the 'ole of life seems clearer
than we ever saw before,
We are swimmin' in deep waters, and
we'd better myke fer shore.
'Tis the strongest who is drownded, yuss,
just nine times out of ten,
Fer the weaker grabs the stronger, and
it's all up with 'im then,
If 'e carnt avoid 'is clutchin' in
this constant stream of air,
Which we lives in, as the fishes
lives in water everywhere.
But 'ow few of us imagines, we,
like minnows in a pool,
Are a travelin' tergether, like
they're doin', in a school;
We are all mixed up together, and
the foolish and the wise

“TOMMY” RHYMES

Stands the charnce of being netted by
a fisher in the skies.

When 'E needs us we are goners and
we 'as ter s'y good-bye
To the breakfast, and the dinner, and
the supper when we die;
We are yanked from out the ocean that
we lived in, don't yer see,
When the gryter power needs us fer
'Is livin', seems ter me.

SISSY THE PINK-UN

SISSY THE PINK-UN

I NEVER seen a nicer chap ter look at, don't yer know,
All pink and white and frilly like, 'e surely was a beau,
'E 'ad a gentle biby voice, 'e 'ad, I do declare,
And though 'e used 'igh-soundin' words, 'e 'ad a lot ter spare.

M'ybe we didn't mimic 'im, us Tommies, on the sly,
We didn't dare ter do it when the officers wos by;
'E took it so good-natured like, just smilin' in a w'y,
That myde us itch ter 'andle 'im quite roughly, you might s'y.

'E wos so blinkin' gentle that 'e myde yer grit yer teeth
Ter stop from carvin' 'im alive ter see wot lay beneath;

From Aldershot ter Salisbury Plain, from Salisbury Plain ter Frarnce

'Is sissy voice just 'aunted us, and fairly myde us prarnce.

'E'd mucked 'is w'y up through the ranks to non. com., it is true,

“TOMMY” RHYMES

And though we 'ated all 'is w'ys, we liked 'im, through
and through;
No matter wot we did, or 'ow, 'e never showed no bile,
And lookin' back, it seems ter me, 'twas that that
myde us rile.
Ter see the w'y 'e 'andled things, in slow and gryceful
curves,
And be so everlastin' nice, why, gryted on yer nerves;
We called 'im Sissy just at first, till Pink-un cyme
erlong;
And though these nymes did seem to 'urt, we didn't
mean no wrong.
Ter'd'y I'd give these 'ands of mine, ter know 'e
wosn't dead,
Ter 'ear 'is voice come down the wind, and see 'is
curly 'ead;
I 'ates ter think 'e doesn't know 'ow much I think of
'im,
Or 'ow I'd die ter syve 'is life and do it with a vim.
It's all too late, fer now 'e's dead, and we are left
be'ind
Ter know 'ow blinkin' mean we wos; 'ow none of us
could find
The 'ero that wos there ter show, before 'e showed
us all
The finest w'y a chap could die, and like a soldier fall.

SISSY THE PINK-UN

It 'appened on a Friday night. We'd 'ad a quiet d'y,
Just now and then a little noise when someone blyzed
away,

So, on the 'ole, we wos surprised, when suddenly the
cry

Went up the line the 'Uns wos loose ,and men began
ter die.

'Twas 'ell ter p'y that night, indeed, it seemed we'd
'ave ter run,

Fer soon we found the 'Uns in strength, wos more
than ten ter one,

But not so Pink-un, 'e withstood as calm as anythink
With 'Uns ter left and right of 'im, and did'nt even
blink

When one great 'ulkin' Boche set out ter stamp upon
'is fyce,

'E girnned, and drove 'is bayonet clean to the 'ilt so
nice

That with a grunt, the beggar fell, but pinned 'im
ter the ground

As other 'Uns wos closin' in, attracted by the sound.

'E killed 'em all, yuss, one by one, with only one arm
free,

“TOMMY” RHYMES

But 'ow 'e managed it is yet a mystery ter me—
And still they came, as thick as bees, and down went
Leary first,
And Pink-un saw it, dropped 'is gun, (not thinkin' if
'e durst)

But leaped right in and with 'is fists laid one more of
'em out,
Not mindin' us, or wot we saw, or 'ow we tried ter
shout
Ter warn 'im that 'e stood no charnce unless 'e quit
and run,
Fer 'e 'ad nothink but 'is 'ands ter fight with,—'e
wos done.

'E 'ad no ears fer anythink but savin' Leary's life,
Fer 'e wos just a single man, and Leary 'ad a wife.
Afore 'e went 'is larst words wos: “Did Leary get
aw'y?”

And when we told 'im yuss, 'e smiled; 'e 'ad no more
ter s'y.

We buried 'im particular, beside a clump of trees,
Becos' we knew 'e loved the woods, the quiet, and the
breeze;

SISSY THE PINK-UN

**And when the chaplain read the part which says
“and earth to earth”**

**We knew wot blinkin' fools we wos, and 'ow much 'e
wos worth.**

“TOMMY” RHYMES

TOMMY OF THE SUB

If yer carried a 'od,
Like a regular clod
On the top of a dump in the scene,
Now you're under the sod
Your're a little tin god
And the poppies above yer are clean;
For yer did all and more
In this glorious war
And are one of it's 'eroes, I mean,
For, of course, to be sure, there's an absence of gore
In the guts of a tin submarine.

If yer served on a sub
You wos counted a dub
With a gizzard as big as a pea;
And yer 'eard in your club
As yer did in the pub
You wos 'arf like an 'Un, don't yer see;
Fer the things that yer did
And the w'y that yer 'id
Sounded much like a cold-blooded gyme;
Yet from captain ter kid, when yer clapped down the
lid
You were 'arf of a corpse just the syme.

TOMMY OF THE SUB

Oh, its all very well,
 But yer life wos like 'ell
When you lay in the ooze and the mud,
In the 'eat and the smell
 Of the stinkin' old shell
And the grind and the noise and the thud;
You were much like a bloke
 Who's afraid of a stroke
When he's 'itched ter 'is bed 'ard and farst;
And yer called it a joke, this expectin' ter choke
In a blinkin' tin fish at the larst.

And if somethin' went wrong,
 Why you 'ad ter be strong
Though yer 'eart pounded 'ard in yer ears,
Like some 'ellish old gong,
 Though it wosn't fer long,
It wos ages ter you, it appears;
Fer there aint one who'd strive
 Ter be buried alive
If 'e knew 'e 'ad choice of 'is death;
But 'd far rather dive, as a bee ter 'is 'ive
O'er the top ter be losin' 'is breath.

If by charnce you 'ave been
 In a tin submarine,

“TOMMY” RHYMES

Which wos rusty and leaky as 'ell;

'Tis the devil you've seen,

 You will know what I mean,

If yer says it and means it as well;

Fer you 'arf dies of fright

 In the blackness of night

When a bomb stands the thing on its 'ead;

If yer dreams it,—all right, you will 'owl with delight

When yer finds you are 'ome in yer bed.

TOMMY WONDERS

TOMMY WONDERS

THERE'S a bit of good old Adam
stirrin' in the best of men;
There's a bit of Eve remainin'
in the blarsted feminine;
And the generytions yet ter come
in turn will tryce in us,
The reason why they frets and fails
and why their women fuss.

I went ter war, I did me best,
and now I'm 'ome again
Expectin' things ter be the syme,
and yet—or I'm insane—
I catch a look in Amy's eyes,
yuss, Amy is me wife,—
That mykes me squirm, and digs down deep,
and cuts me like a knife.

And I, in turn, sees in 'er eyes
a look, occasional,
That sets me stummick quiverin';
fer when I met the gal

“TOMMY” RHYMES

I 'ad in Frarnc, so strike me pink,
the self syme look I saw,
As when me wife meets 'Arry now,
and sees 'im to the door.

Fer 'Arry was at 'ome while I
was over there in Frarnc,
And now and then took Amy out
ter 'ave a little darnce;
Of course there wosn't nothin' wrong
in that, 'ow could there be?
And yet, gorblimy, if there was,
I'd lick 'im, don't yer see.

That there's the Adam in me 'ead,
that there's the Eve in 'er;
I knows inside that I went wrong,
that somethin' did occur;
And she, per'aps, is thinkin' too,
she dassent s'y a word,
Because she thinks I smells a rat
about wot 'as occurred.

So there we are, the two of us,
a sparrin' fer a charnce

TOMMY WONDERS

Ter catch the other in a lie,
or in a crooked glarnc;
The both of us is fit ter bust
wif jealousy, no doubt;
And yet the neither of us knows
just wot it's all about.

“TOMMY” RHYMES

TOMMY BLINDED

I DIDN’T mean ter bump yer, Sir,
yer see, I ’as ter grope.
I’m sorry, Sir,—why thank’ee Sir,
why, no,—I’d only mope
If I sat by the fire at ’ome,
and couldn’t see the gryte—
Yer see,—I ’aven’t quite got used
ter this ’ere kind of fyte.

I allus loved ter look at things,
and now I’ve got ter feel,
And everythink I touch seems strynege—
as though it wosn’t real;
I carn’t explain just ’ow I feel,
it isn’t like a joke
Ter live in blackness like a pall
until yer think you’ll choke.

Yer tries ter see, that’s it, yer tries—
and nothin’ penetrates
The thick black fog before yer eyes,
and though yer waits, and waits,

TOMMY BLINDED

No light can reach yer through the mist,
and then yer want ter scream;
Just like yer does when wykin' up
from some fierce, 'orrid dream.

But worst of all, yer realize
it aint a dream at all,
And then the perspiration starts
and beads begin ter fall;
Yer feel them 'ot upon yer 'ands,
and wants ter shriek aloud,
And wrestle with the octopus
that 'olds yer in a cloud.

All that's at first; for, presently,
another kind of light
Begins to glimmer in yer mind;—
of course it isn't sight,—
There aint no nyme fer wot it is,
yet everythink yer touch
Is lighted inwards, so ter speak,
and so yer cease ter clutch,—

But gently lay yer 'and on things,
and see them in the dark;
Just like a man who 'ears its song
can see a little lark.

“TOMMY” RHYMES

I'm not so sure I 'ungers for
the sight I've lost at all,
Fer now I'm blinded all the folks
tyke care lest I should fall;

I found a lot of love in those
I used ter 'ate before,
And more than this,—I've found that love
is right down in the core
Of every man I meets ter-d'y,
and every woman too;
Now when I 'ad me sight, yer see,
just that I never knew.

So why should I be sorry that
I've lost the use of eyes,
If, in me 'eart, I knows I've found
another kind of prize;
The knowledge that I've lost, at last,
the enemies I 'ad,
By findin' out that all the lot
are glad ter myke me glad.

THE WOMAN HATER

THE WOMAN HATER

No doubt I'm free ter talk about the things I saw
and 'eard

All through the war, no doubt I am, and yet it seems
absurd,—

I know it does, yet, 'onor bright, I 'aven't got the
'eart

Ter give away the 'ole of it, but just one tiny part.

The 'ole thing wos so 'ideous, so full of muck and
slime,

It isn't fit ter put in words, much less ter put in
rhyme;

And yet there wos one spot, I think, that orter come
ter light,

And that is 'ow the women seemed ter down a lot
of fright.

I've seen a woman, in this war, do things ter myke
yer quail,

And do them with a steady 'and, not even turnin'
pale

When Tommy 'owled beneath the knife the surgeon
'ad ter use

Without an anaesthetic or a little drop of booze.

“TOMMY” RHYMES

The 'Uns 'ad lifted all the lot, and 'adn't left a thing
Except a lot of dirty cloths which we must wash and
wring

Before we dared ter bind the wounds that cyme erlong
so farst

It looked as though we never could attend to them
at larst.

But 'ere the women dipped in quick, and took us all
in charge,

"Twas Tommy 'ere, and Tommy there; "Who left yer
out at large?"

"There's work ter do; why, man alive, 'op round and
do yer bit!"

And them a *larfin'* and the while, and *singin'*, think
of it.

I wonder wot there is inside a woman's 'eart and soul;
At 'ome they're nice, oh, I don't think! at least, not
on the 'ole;

They seems so selfish there ter me, unless I'm in the
wrong—

Fer in the war they went beyond us men in bein'
strong.

I wos a woman-'ater wunce, but ever since the war,

THE WOMAN HATER

Although I'm lookin' sideways yet, I'm really not so
shore—

Yet even though they did the things I've spoke of,
and about,

The very moment they gets 'ome they starts ter jaw
yer out.

“TOMMY” RHYMES

TOMMY THINKS IT OUT

I'M just an ordinary cuss, wot's got a tyste fer
h'art

And moosic and the likes of sich, and though I did
me part

All through the war ter down the 'Uns—I think that
war is 'ell;

I saw some things, while over there, I wouldn't care
ter tell.

It got me thinkin', did the war, with death so blinkin'
close

Just all the while, that now I 'opes it aint myde me
“*morose*.”

That wos the Capting's word, 'Morose,' which 'e said,
kills a chap,

And blymed near kills a company, if kept too long
on tap.

I didn't know just wot it meant, that narsty soundin'
word,

And so I arsked the Capting once, and this is wot
I 'eard—

As 'is blue eyes looked down at me, as blue as any
steel—

TOMMY THINKS IT OUT

“Me boy,” ‘e says, “it don’t mean you. It isn’t wot *you* feel.

“It’s wot the blighter ‘as in ‘im, wot’s allus got the ‘ump,

“And ‘ands out ter the rank and file a most forbiddin’ lump

“Of stuff that ryses all their bile, and sets ‘em against the law,

“The only thing that kills *morale* is that ‘ere line of jaw.”

But ‘ere I ‘ad ter interrup’: “Wot’s that” says I, —‘morale’?

“Wot ‘oly Moses sort of word is that”, I says ter Carl.

That wos the Capting’s nyme, yer see, ‘is father wos a ‘Un,

Which goes ter show ‘ow strynge is war, when all is said and done.

“Morale, says ‘e, “is just like this: yer see the ‘Uns out there

“They’ve got it in their bones and blood—oh no, yer needn’t stare,

“TOMMY” RHYMES

“I mean it. When they’re little chaps, they gets it like a dose

“Of medicine each d’y, and so they ’ugs it close.

“It means the Kaiser’s allies first, then Fatherland, and then

“The rest that’s left, a mere machine, no matter ’ow or when,

“When once ’is country calls out loud ter syve the Kaiser’s life

“Just stiffens up and drops ’issself, ‘is money, and ’is wife;

“ ’E’s got ter do it, don’t yer see, ’e ’as no other choice,

“So loses all ’is self control, and even drops ’is voice.

“Fergettin’ everythink but this, ’is natural morale.”

“Good Lord,” says I, “that’s wot it is. Fergettin’ ’ow ter snarl.”

You’ve got it, snapped the Captaing’s eyes, as plain as plain could be,

’E didn’t s’y another word, I understood, yer see;

And as I wos ’is Sargint then, I dropped a word or two

To every man who wos ‘morose,’ which turned ’is ‘me’ ter ‘you.’

TOMMY THINKS IT OUT

That 'ere's the 'ole of it, I think. A soldier is all right

When once 'e sees it isn't 'im that's got ter up and fight.

'E does it then fer others first, and thus 'e finds at larst

'E's wysted all 'is life before, and so fergets the parst.

"TOMMY" RHYMES

MUD

NOW we all knows little blighters likes
ter tell a pack o' lies,
And its just imaginetyion, which
if anythink's a prize;
And we all knows 'ow we mucked abart
a playin' in the dirt
And the two things went tergether, Lord!
it didn't do no 'urt.

It wos mud—mud—mud,
Which wos born into our blood,
We wos raised and fed upon it,
And our lives we're spendin' on it,
Why? O' course.

Now we all know edicytion is
supposed ter mean a lot,
That the more we knows of everythink
the 'igher up we've got;
But I notice 'ow the knowin' ones
is muckin' more than us,
And is diggin' in the muck-'eap where
it stinks a little wuss!

MUD

For it's mud—mud—mud,
Which wos stirred into their blood,
And their nurses kept 'im from it,
So they wants ter gorge upon it,
 Why? O' course.

Now we both fell in the Flarnders mud
and landed side by side;
Per'aps it wos the Flarnders mud
which myde us both decide
That wos the lesson we required
ter teach us 'ow ter stick
Against all odds ter lick the 'Un
without a gettin' sick.

It wos mud—mud—mud,
All around us like a flood,
Everythink wos jumble in it,
Did we 'ave ter tumble in it?
 Why—o' course!

It wos wonderful ter watch the w'y
we got erlong out there,
For it brought us both ter realize
we 'ad ter do our share

“TOMMY” RHYMES

**In the cleanin’ of the dung-eap that
our civilyshun built,**

**By the plycin’ of the punishment
right on the top of guilt.**

**In the mud—mud—mud
We both spilled our brains and blood,
Till the ‘Uns wos choked within it
When America fell in it,
Why? O’ course.**

THE HARVEST

THE HARVEST

I 'AVEN'T lived too long, I know, but war 'as
myde me sure
I am alive, and that's a lot, indeed it is a cure
Fer all the foolish things in life—the things ter
throw away;
Fer though I knows I'm 'ere just now, I 'aven't long
ter stay.

A few more d'ys of 'appiness, not muckin' in a mess;
A few more charnces, as it were, of bringing 'appiness
Instead of 'atred and its kind—ter get the biggest
bite
From off me neighbor's property—and do it out of
sight;

I'm livin' now ter do me best—to be quite satisfied
With 'arf a loaf, instead of all;—ter drop the silly
pride
That mykes a chap wyke up too late ter find 'e wos
a fool
Ter think the gifts 'e 'ad wos 'is: 'e does so, as a
rule.

“TOMMY” RHYMES

That is the foolishst idea, just think a moment—
gift,

Whoever gyve one to 'issself, would know the w'y ter
drift

Quite careless like erlong the stream ter finish at the
bar;

Tis there yer find the wrecks of men who knows just
wot they are.

The only things we 'ave in life are those we gets on
trust;

We orter use them well, indeed, not only ought to—
must—

Fer if we don't, no matter 'ow we really seems ter
gain,

We're buildin' up, as sure as fate, a future store of
pain.

It isn't money mykes the man, it's wot 'e 'asn't got
'E's lookin' arter all the time, now aint it truly—
wot?

You never 'unt fer things ye r'ave, now do you, on
the square?

Unless you think you've lost 'em, or they ain't no
longer there.

THE HARVEST

Then, in a trice, yer stop and think—where can
that thing 'ave got!

I know I put it down right 'ere—and now it's gone
ter pot;

I wonder who 'as tyken it—some thief 'as been
around!

And this you're thinkin' all the time until the object's
found.

It's givin' counts! You 'ave a gift! It's yours ter
give away,

You cannot 'old it fer yourself, not even fer a day;
Fer if yer do—the reason's plain—it never grows a
bit,

But starts ter shrinkin' right away;—that 'ere's the
'ole of it.

Fer gifts is kin ter seeds, yer know, you plant 'em
in the soil,

And if you're wise yer chooses well, and aint afraid
of toil;

And pretty soon yer see results—the crop begins
ter grow,

And then comes 'arvest time, and then:—oh well,
the rest you know.

“TOMMY” RHYMES

’TIS THEY WHO WENT

”TIS they who went who myde fer you the plyce
yer ’ave terd’y,
Who, by their orful sacrifice, ’ave pointed out the
w’y
Ter start ter myke yer peace on earth, with good-
will toward all men;
’Ave you fergotten who it wos said that, and ’ow,—
and when?

Per’aps you’d like ter drown in tears, becos’ yer can
ferget
So easily the only thing which conquers men as yet—
The truth—the blyzin’ truth—the light that dwells
above—below,—
And right within the ’eart of ’earts of all yer think
yer know.

Can you ferget, when fyce ter fyce with them as fell
and died,
They fell as men, ter rise as stars, which cannot be
denied?
Can you ferget them, live erlong, with just yerself in
mind;

'TIS THEY WHO WENT

Or with the idea that you count becos' you're left
be'ind?

ARISE—AWAKE! Yer hour comes! They 'ave
not died in vain

Who gyve their lives fer other lives,—in sufferin'
and pain!

The worm 'as turned, fer Gawd is just;—**ARISE—**
AWAKE!—I cry,

The sword is 'angin' by a thread that does not fall
ter-d'y.

ARISE—AWAKE! Face TRUTH in time, and
watch time's finger trace

The 'istory that's bound ter come as race devours
race;

We all are one, and one is all; each mucker 'as a soul;

ARISE—AWAKE! fer 'e shall live, who first accepts
the 'ole.

“TOMMY” RHYMES

HE, OF LABOR—AND HE, OF CAPITAL

Comrades In A Trench

HE, OF LABOR

I never 'ad no schoolin'. Now-a-dyes
A kid 'as 'arf a charnce. 'E often plyes
Wif other kids that's better than 'issel.
You know wot I mean! The coves wif wealf
Who s'y: “I'll tyke it” when they're in a shop
Wifout so much as blinkin' till they stop.
I never 'ad no wealf—

HE, OF CAPITAL

But stop and think

Old top! You have the best of it. We blink
When you are sleepin—fearing that the day
May bring disaster. Handing out the pay
As we must willy-nilly, every week
We sit and scan our books, with paling cheek
Forgetting everything but you, your need;
While we are charged with avarice and greed.

HE, OF LABOR

'Old on! That aint the w'y I looks at it.
You 'ave a lot of money. Well. We 'ooks at it

HE, OF LABOR—HE, OF CAPITAL

And gits a trifle fer our work—that's all.
You 'ave a lot, and put it out ter myke
A profit on the little that we tyke.
Fer we carn't s'y as two and two mykes five.
We've got ter spend our all ter keep alive.

HE, OF CAPITAL

Perhaps you're right in one sense, in a way,
For values should not change from day to day.
And yet they do for both of us the same.
If you demand and I supply—the game
Is played the other way, for you supply
Me with the coin to pay you with, and I
Take for my profit—

HE, OF LABOR

All! That's wot I said:
You tyke it all. We 'ave no profit. Just a bed
Ter sleep on, Missis, and a lot of kids
Ter feed and eddicate.

HE, OF CAPITAL

But who forbids
That you employ men as I do? Just think
A moment. Have you less to eat and drink
Because you labor for it with your sweat?

“TOMMY” RHYMES

To pay you what I owe, I have to get
As many times as much, aye, every week,
As men in my employ. Am I a sneak,
A thief, because I make enough to fill
Your stomachs and my own. I pay the bill.

HE, OF LABOR

Ter 'ell yer do. You owns the wery shop
We trydes in, 'cause we 'ave ter. Pay the top
Fer everythink we get, because we must,
While you fill up yer pockets till they bust.

HE, OF CAPITAL

It seems to me your grievance is not just.
You say you trade with us because you must.
That is not so. You trade the cheapest way,
As all men do, who, honest, wish to pay
For all they get—not choosing to pay more
Than is demanded in the common store.
And as to profits, you are far from right.
We make no more—

HE, OF LABOR

Gorblimy! Wot a fright!
Yer myke no more! Yer myke it all! We lose
All that we 'ave. A fat lot we can choose.

HE, OF LABOR—HE, OF CAPITAL

We 'ave our wyges. That is all we get
And work like slyves. I carn't see that you
sweat
When you're at 'ome. You 'ave ter do it 'ere
The syme as me.

I wish we 'ad some beer!
Don't you? See 'ow it drizzles. Ain't it queer
Ter think as you and me, wif 'Uns so near
Should be a Talkin' bout the d'y's of peace?

HE, OF CAPITAL, [*raising himself and peering cautiously into the mist over No Man's Land, while drops of moisture fall with clock-like precision from his dripping helmet*]

Don't talk of peace! This war will never cease
Until we've licked the Hun for good and all.
Come here a moment! Don't forget you're tall
And let them pot you. What d'you make of
that—

Right over there?

HE, OF LABOR

Where? Oh, there! That's the fat
Old Boche we got a week ago. I swear
'E stinks as rotten as a mule.

“TOMMY” RHYMES

HE, OF CAPITAL

Forbear!

You make me ill. It's bad enough to know
The thing is there without your talking so.

Shh! Keep quiet! [*He takes careful aim and fires, as his companion hastily grabs his rifle and joins him on the firing-step*]

They're on us! I was sure
that something moved—

HE, OF LABOR [firing]

Yer ain't said nothink truer!

They're thick as bees. They'll 'ave us in a trice.
I bagged another. Ah, that's very nice!
Yer would surprise us, would yer? Tyke it now
Right in yer guts, yer b——y sow!

HE, OF CAPITAL

Good Lord!—we're cut off from the rest. Look
out,

It's death for us. What's best to do? Don't
shout.

You're wasting breath. What's best to do—
and quick?

HE, OF LABOR

What's best to do! Good Lord! You myke
me sick.

HE, OF LABOR—HE, OF CAPITAL

Ter down the 'Uns! What's best ter do! Ter
send

A few more 'ome, and stick it ter the end.

Down that there one, 'e's comin' straight—

[*They both continue firing, as the din of musketry increases on every side*]

'Urrah!

They've broke. There goes the whistle. 'Ere
we are

Come on, old pal—

[*At this moment a shell bursts near, wounding both seriously, one in the head and arm, the other in the leg and thigh*]

HE, OF CAPITAL

They've got me. Are you hurt?

HE, OF LABOR

Yuss—in me leg. It's covered up wif dirt.

HE, OF CAPITAL

Just wait. I'll help you when I fix my arm.

It's nothing much, I guess. A scratch—no harm.

HE, OF LABOR

[*Watching with dilating eyes, as he sees the bone of*

“TOMMY” RHYMES

his comrade's arm sticking through the sleeve]

Yer call that nothin' much. My Gawd—my
Gawd!

Yer got yer blighty now, fer fair.—Oh Lord!

You'll 'ave to 'elp me, I carn't ryse me leg—

It feels just like a bloomin' wooden peg.

I'd 'elp if I could use me pins ter stand.

Ugh! Don't that 'urt yer, when yer touch that
'and?

Gawd! Wot a mess. I'm wuss orf than I
thought—

Me leg's a jelly. My larst battle's fought.

I'm gettin' f'ynt. Where are yer, pal?—

HE, OF CAPITAL

I'm here,

But getting faint myself. Our end is near.

* * *

Night fell athwart the pair within the trench.

While both were senseless, dawn arose. The stench
Of rotting corpses failed for once to rouse

The two who sprawled, like drunkards from carouse,
Inert and limp. Noon passed. Then afternoon.

And evening brought to light a sickly moon

Before one stirred and broke to feeble groans,
Accented by the other's feebler moans

HE, OF LABOR—HE, OF CAPITAL

For water—mother—wife—and all the rest
That, at the worst, still prove the last and best.
Despite their wounds, they suffered hunger, thirst,
And so, recalled to life, they thought at first,
More of a keen desire to drink and feed,
(Forgetting for the moment, surgeon's need.)
One had his iron ration still intact,
And in their dug-out cigarettes were packed;
But both were now so weak from loss of blood,
A yard or two apart in sticky mud,
That neither felt the strength to move an inch—
An inch of movement meant an ell of flinch
For two so badly wounded. Through the night
They spoke in wonder of their awful plight,
And pledged 'tween man and man the soul of man,
Alone with God and neath His starry span.
At break of dawn, they realized their trench
Lay now in No Man's Land, between the French
And British, and the Huns. It meant they'd starve,
Unless one side attacked again, or die
In misery of wounds. They could not try
To reach their lines themselves in any case,
(For now of courage, both had lost a trace.)
Unless they crawled, with injured limbs entwined
Across the gap twixt them and humankind.
The hours passed—and slowly strength returned
And ther they spoke, as both with thirst were burned:

“TOMMY” RHYMES

HE, OF CAPITAL

It's—rotten—isn't it! How far away
You are!—It's funny,—isn't it!—I say,
You know,—you mustn't—

HE, OF LABOR

—’Ow I want ter die.
Gawd—Gawd! I've licked the mud until it's
dry!
For Gawd's sake, water—

HE, OF CAPITAL

All right, pal o' mine.
I'll get it—somehow. Cheero! Don't—don't
whine —
You mustn't—

HE, OF LABOR

Do yer think it's goin' to—rine?
Oh—I carn't stand it. Oh—this awful pyne!

HE, OF CAPITAL

I'll—get—it! Somehow. Wait—a—bit. Let's
see;
I'll try—it. Oh—good Lord! I can't. Just
three

HE, OF LABOR—HE, OF CAPITAL

Yards—more. Ah! Wait—a—bit. For God's
sake wait.

HE, OF LABOR

Go on—old pal—and leave me to my fate.

HE, OF CAPITAL

Hah! Got—it! Wait a bit. Just—wait—a
—bit,

And very—soon—Oh God!—be—drink—ing—
it.

Don't struggle—boy—I'm coming—

HE, OF LABOR

Oh,—my Gawd!

HE, OF CAPITAL [*frenzied*]

No—I—lay me—down to—sleep. Oh Lord!
Our Father,—who—art in—Heaven—Wait a
bit—

Hallowed—be—thy—name. Christ! I'm—
bringing it!

Thy—kingdom come. Hold on a minute—
please,

Hold on. Thy—will—be—done—God! Oh,
my knees.

Are weak. Hold on—Oh God! hold on—hold on.

“TOMMY” RHYMES

He, of LABOR [*almost unconscious*]

Mamma——Mamma!

He, of CAPITAL [*holding the canteen to his comrade's lips, who swallows greedily, his eyes bulging*]

There—there, old pal, at—last.

He, of LABOR [*reviving with the water*]

Yes, mother! This is 'im. Oh Mamma! 'Old me farst!

He, of CAPITAL [*faints. A minute or two passes*]

Ah!——

He, of LABOR [*pulling at his companion's body, which has fallen*]

Hi—hi—pal! Ye're lyin' in the mud —
Tyke out yer fyce—You'll choke! Look! That's
'is blood!

Tyke out yer fyce—I s'y. [*He shakes his pal's body, and with a superhuman effort, manages to turn him over on his side*]

Where's that canteen?

It wos right 'ere. I sore it. Lor! 'Ow mean!
Oh, 'ere it is! It's empty! Not a drop!
I must 'ave drunk it all. Wyke up—ol' top!

HE, OF LABOR—HE, OF CAPITAL

Good Gawd! Oh beast—beast—beast I wos ter
drink

It all! 'E's comin' out of it, I think,
'Is eyes is flutterin'. Don't let 'im die,
Oh Gawd! 'E is my myte! I got ter cry!
Don't let 'im go!

HE, OF CAPITAL

Good bye, old pal! Good bye.
I'm going. Look! Alice! There she is. I—
I'm coming, Alice. Wait, oh wait! Don't go!

HE, OF LABOR [*frightened at death*]

Good Gawd! Oh, bloody 'ell. Good Gawd!
Oh—Oh!

HE, OF CAPITAL

Not—bloody—hell. It's easy,—dying. Look!
See! There he sits. Still writing in a book.
He's counting out your time. You have to live.
I'm sorry, pal o' mine. What would I give
To take you with me—

HE, OF LABOR

Don't go, pal! Not yet,
And leave me all alone!

HE, OF LABOR—HE, OF CAPITAL

HE, OF CAPITAL

I'll not forget

Find me my little book, and—let—me—write—
Before my strength is gone. No more we'll
 fight

Together—you and I.

[*He, of Labor takes a small note-book from his companion's tunic, and supports him while he writes, frequently pausing for breath, until he feebly signs his name at the end of a page*]

Keep it with care.

[*he gives him the book*]

And guard it well. It gives to you a share
Of Capital. More than you ever had
To spend.—'Twill spoil you, I'm afraid. Too
 bad!

But then, you'll need an artificial leg
And cannot labor,—so—you'd have—to—beg.
I'm—sleepy. Let—me—down. Go—easy, pal!

HE, OF LABOR [*breaking into tears and rending sobs*]

Oh—Oh! O bloody—'ell. 'E's gone! No gal
Loved me like 'im! Wot's that? Wot's that
 I 'ear?

